2003 – 2004 Michigan School Readiness Program

Program Quality Assessment

Statewide Data Report

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Introduction

The following report summarizes Michigan School Readiness Program (MSRP) classroom quality data collected during the 2003 – 2004 program year's Mid-Year Report process. Specifically, Program Quality Assessment (PQA)[1] scores are described. There are two important factors to keep in mind when considering for the PQA data from the 2003 – 2004 program year. First, all of these scores are self-reported. The self-reported nature of the data introduces the potential for higher score reporting by teachers than an outside observer might have scored the same classrooms. Second, this data was produced using the new second edition of the PQA. As explained in the administration manual of the revised PQA, the first edition's old scoring rules produced scores of a 4 or 5 even when programs were actually more variable in their levels of quality[2]. Scoring rules for the revised PQA have been changed such that a more normal distribution of scores is produced based on observed and documented program characteristics.

Table 1 below shows both the PQA total score and the sub-scale average scores for MSRP classrooms during the 2002 – 2003 and 2003 – 2004 program years.

Table 1: Total and Sub-scale Average Scores

	2002-2003 Mean (n = 1,120)	2003-2004 Mean (n = 1,127)	Change from PY02 – PY03 (% Decrease)
Total Score	4.57	4.28	-.29 (6.3)
Learning Environment	4.47	4.12	-.35 (7.8)
Daily Routine	4.50	4.20	-.30 (6.7)
Adult-Child Interaction	4.76	4.46	-.30 (6.3)
Curriculum Planning & Assessment	4.43	4.19	-.24 (5.4)
Parent Involvement & Family Services	4.63	4.54	-.09 (1.9)
Staff Qualifications & Staff Development	4.51	4.12	-.39 (8.6)
Program Management	4.61	4.37	-.24 (5.2)

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[1] High/Scope Educational Research Foundation. (2003). *Preschool Program Quality Assessment 2nd edition.* Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press.

[2] High/Scope Educational Research Foundation. (2003). *Preschool Program Quality Assessment 2nd edition Administration Manual.* Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press.

As expected, there is an across the board lowering in average scores due to the scoring rule changes. Note that the changes are relatively small and represent only a 2 – 8% decrease. Tests conducted using the old and new versions of the PQA on a sample of MSRP classrooms in 2000 resulted in score decreases of -.43 for Learning Environment, -.34 for Daily Routine, and -.27 for Adult-Child Interaction[3]. The decreases in Table 1 are similar suggesting that the new scoring rules have produced a less skewed (and presumably more accurate) distribution of scores[4]. However, comparison to the 2000 data also shows that average scores ranged from 2.77 – 3.41. The very high scores reported here suggest that the self-report nature of the data continues to inflate scores.

Areas In Need of Improvement

Scores on the PQA can range from 1 to 5, with 1 representing low quality and 5 representing exceptional quality. A useful way to interpret PQA scores is that scores less than 3 indicate low quality, scores between 3 and 4 indicate medium quality, and scores above 4 indicate high quality. Table 1 shows that MSRP programs considered themselves to be on average high quality programs.

In previous reports, information was provided on the specific items on which 10% or more of classrooms reported a score at or below 3. This was done as an indicator of areas in need of improvement. Just as the new scoring rules pulled down average scores, it is reasonable to expect that the new rules would produce a higher percentage of classrooms indicating a need for improvement. Indeed, in the PY02 data, 32% of the items fit into the criteria of needing improvement. In the current PY03 data, 71% of the items fall into this category.

Table 2 shows three different thresholds that can be used to identify areas in need of improvement. The first is the previously used standard of 10% or more of classrooms scoring at or below 3. The second threshold is 25% or more of classrooms that scored at or below 3. The third threshold is 10% of classrooms scored at or below 2. These thresholds

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[3] Jurkiewicz, T. (2003). The Revised Preschool PQA: Report on Psychometric Properties. Instrument evaluation report to the Michigan Department of Education. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, Research Division.

[4] During Fall Kick-Off and in the subsequent months, MSRP staff members received training on how to use the revised PQA prior to administering it in their programs for the Mid-Year Report.

can be interpreted as moving from medium to low quality. Many of the items like providing a safe and healthy environment more than likely appear on this list as a result of a downward trend in the score distribution. An item like diversity-related materials provides more evidence of a need for improvement (27% of all items). An item like small-group time that registers across all three thresholds is clearly in need of improvement (13% of all items).

Table 2: PQA Items with Low to Medium Quality Across Classrooms

PQA Items by Section	10% or more Scoring ≤ 3	25% or more Scoring ≤ 3	10% or more Scoring ≤ 2
Learning Environment			
A. Safe and healthy environment	✓		
B. Defined interest areas	✓		
C. Logically located interest areas	✓		
D. Outdoor space, equipment, materials	✓	✓	
E. Organization and labeling of materials	✓	✓	
F. Varied and open-ended materials	✓	✓	
G. Plentiful materials	✓		
H. Diversity-related materials	✓	✓	
I. Displays of child-initiated work	✓	✓	
Daily Routine			
A. Consistent daily routine			
B. Parts of the day	✓		
C. Appropriate time for each part of day	✓		
D. Time for child planning	✓	✓	
E. Time for child-initiated activities	✓		
F. Time for child recall	✓	✓	
G. Small-group time	✓	✓	✓
H. Large-group time	✓		
I. Choices during transition times	✓		
J. Cleanup time with reasonable choices			
K. Snack or meal time	✓		
L. Outside time	✓		

PQA Items by Section	10% or more Scoring ≤ 3	25% or more Scoring ≤ 3	10% or more Scoring ≤ 2
Adult-Child Interaction			
A. Meeting basic physical needs			
B. Handling separation from home			
C. Warm and caring atmosphere			
D. Support for child communication	✓		
E. Support for non-English speakers	✓		
F. Adults as partners in play	✓		
G. Encouragement of child initiatives			
H. Support for child learning at group times	✓		
I. Opportunities for child explorations	✓		
J. Acknowledgment of child efforts	✓	✓	✓
K. Encouragement for peer interactions			
L. Independent problem-solving			
M. Conflict resolution by children	✓		
Curriculum Planning and Assessment			
A. Curriculum model	✓	✓	
B. Team teaching	✓	✓	✓
C. Comprehensive child records			
D. Anecdotal note-taking by staff	✓	✓	✓
E. Use of child observation measure	✓		
Parent involvement and Family Services			
A. Opportunities for involvement			
B. Parents on policy-making committees	✓	✓	✓
C. Parent participation in child activities			
D. Sharing of curriculum information	✓		
E. Staff-parent informal interactions			
F. Extending learning at home	✓		
G. Formal meetings with parents			
H. Diagnostic/special education services			
I. Service referrals as needed	✓		
J. Transition to kindergarten	✓		

Table 2: PQA Items with Low to Medium Quality Across Classrooms (continued)

PQA Items by Section	10% or more Scoring ≤ 3	25% or more Scoring ≤ 3	10% or more Scoring ≤ 2
Staff Qualifications and Staff Development			
A. Program director's background	✓		✓
B. Instructional staff's background	✓		
C. Support staff orientation and supervision			
D. Ongoing professional development	✓		
E. In-service training content and methods	✓	✓	
F. Observation and feedback	✓	✓	
G. Professional organization affiliation	✓	✓	✓
Program Management			
A. Program licensed			
B. Continuity in instructional staff			
C. Program assessment	✓		
D. Recruitment and enrollment plan	✓		
E. Operating policies and procedures			
F. Accessibility for those with disabilities	✓		
G. Adequacy of program funding	✓	✓	✓
Total Percentage of Items in Category	**71%**	**27%**	**13%**

Item Specific Descriptive Statistics

Finally, Table 3 provides average scores for every PQA item. Yet another result of the new scoring rules is larger standard deviations than in previous years. In the past very small standard deviations suggested little variability in scores across classrooms. For example, in PY02 the standard deviation for some items was as low as .32 and tended to be in the .5 - .6 range, rarely was there a full point in variability. In the current data, the standard deviations consistently approach or exceed a full point.

Table 3: PQA Item Means and Standard Deviations

PQA Item by Section	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Learning Environment		
A. Safe and healthy environment	4.28	.81
B. Defined interest areas	4.57	.73
C. Logically located interest areas	4.34	.82
D. Outdoor space, equipment, materials	3.99	.97
E. Organization and labeling of materials	3.95	.98
F. Varied and open-ended materials	4.01	.92
G. Plentiful materials	4.36	.95
H. Diversity-related materials	3.66	.89
I. Displays of child-initiated work	3.90	1.01
Daily Routine		
A. Consistent daily routine	4.77	.58
B. Parts of the day	4.19	.95
C. Appropriate time for each part of day	4.62	.79
D. Time for child planning	3.70	1.10
E. Time for child-initiated activities	4.39	.85
F. Time for child recall	3.55	1.08
G. Small-group time	3.58	1.30
H. Large-group time	4.18	.89
I. Choices during transition times	4.17	.97
J. Cleanup time with reasonable choices	4.71	.62
K. Snack or meal time	4.31	.85
L. Outside time	4.22	.96

PQA Item by Section	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Adult-Child Interaction		
A. Meeting basic physical needs	4.73	.56
B. Handling separation from home	4.70	.61
C. Warm and caring atmosphere	4.73	.55
D. Support for child communication	4.51	.73
E. Support for non-English speakers	4.47	.86
F. Adults as partners in play	4.36	.85
G. Encouragement of child initiatives	4.71	.69
H. Support for child learning at group times	4.41	.86
I. Opportunities for child explorations	4.37	.87
J. Acknowledgment of child efforts	3.39	1.08
K. Encouragement for peer interactions	4.71	.63
L. Independent problem-solving	4.65	.65
M. Conflict resolution by children	4.30	.87
Curriculum Planning and Assessment		
A. Curriculum model	4.17	1.07
B. Team teaching	3.74	1.18
C. Comprehensive child records	4.81	.55
D. Anecdotal note-taking by staff	3.70	1.04
E. Use of child observation measure	4.52	.88

PQA Item by Section	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Parent involvement and Family Services		
A. Opportunities for involvement	4.66	.61
B. Parents on policy-making committees	3.79	1.28
C. Parent participation in child activities	4.76	.49
D. Sharing of curriculum information	4.39	.85
E. Staff-parent informal interactions	4.78	.48
F. Extending learning at home	4.45	.79
G. Formal meetings with parents	4.91	.34
H. Diagnostic/special education services	4.86	.49
I. Service referrals as needed	4.36	.87
J. Transition to kindergarten	4.49	.82
Staff Qualifications and Staff Development		
A. Program director's background	4.23	1.08
B. Instructional staff's background	4.34	.87
C. Support staff orientation and supervision	4.63	.69
D. Ongoing professional development	4.19	.81
E. In-service training content and methods	3.96	1.05
F. Observation and feedback	4.09	.99
G. Professional organization affiliation	3.40	1.17
Program Management		
A. Program licensed	4.87	.54
B. Continuity in instructional staff	4.65	.75
C. Program assessment	4.28	.83
D. Recruitment and enrollment plan	4.23	.87
E. Operating policies and procedures	4.52	.72
F. Accessibility for those with disabilities	4.27	1.10
G. Adequacy of program funding	3.79	1.19